

PREFACE

This Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan for Rock Creek Reserve (Plan) combines U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS or Service) goals and management philosophies with those of the Department of Energy (DOE) in management of the natural resources of the Rock Creek Reserve, located within the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site's (Rocky Flats or Site) Buffer Zone. The Buffer Zone has been described in many public forums as a "crown jewel" for its importance as an area relatively unimpacted by agricultural use and development for many decades, and as an important link in the region's efforts to maintain an open space corridor in a rapidly developing area (Fig. 1). A federally-listed, threatened species, the Preble's meadow jumping mouse, resides in all three drainages located on the Site, including Rock Creek.

Implementation of this Plan will not impact the cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats. All other agreements, plans, and policies dealing with cleanup, and existing easements take precedence over this Plan. No funds from cleanup are used for preparation or implementation of this Plan, except where already designated for Buffer Zone activities. Although the term "reserve" carries no legal designations or requirements, it does connote an intention of natural resource-based land use. This may or may not carry over into the final decision for use of Rocky Flats. The Plan will maintain the integrity of this "crown jewel" for the use(s) that will ultimately be decided. Finally, while this Plan is intended specifically to address the management needs of Rock Creek Reserve, both DOE and the Service believe that the actions described herein will have applicability to other undisturbed areas of the Rocky Flats buffer zone.

Adjacent to the northwest corner of the Rock Creek Reserve is the DOE National Wind Technology Center (NWTC). DOE has been conducting wind energy research on that site since the mid-1970's. It also serves as DOE's hybrid energy research and testing center. The NWTC is not associated with the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site. For the purposes of this management plan, use of the terms: DOE, Rocky Flats (RF), Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS), or Rocky Flats Field Office (RFFO) does not include the NWTC.

This Plan is intended to serve as the management plan for the area known as the Rock Creek Reserve as long as the area remains under DOE ownership. If Rocky Flats becomes a National Wildlife Refuge, a Refuge planning process will be conducted for the entire Site, and it will be managed in accordance with the enabling legislation and other law and policy applicable to the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). It is anticipated that the transfer of the Rocky Flats property to the USFWS would not occur until the Final Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act Record of Decision for Rocky Flats is issued. The overall actions proposed within this Plan are generally consistent with management of National Wildlife Refuges.